ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

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June 1, 2025 – Sunday After Ascension
Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council in Nicaea

This Week

Sat May 31 – No Vespers
Sun June 1, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship (Fr Edward Hughes)

Sat June 7, 4:30pm – **HOLY PENTECOST.** Festal Vespers w/Litya (Fr John)
Sun June 8, 9am – Festal Divine Liturgy with Kneeling Vespers (Fr John).
(Brief) All-Parish Meeting.

Sat June 14, 4:30pm – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sun June 15, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

Hymns of the Day

Resurrection (Tone 6)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; / the guards became as dead men. / Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thy most pure body. / Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. / O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

Ascension, Tone 4

O Christ God, Thou hast ascended in glory, / granting joy to Thy disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. / Through the blessing, they were assured / that Thou art the Son of God, // the Redeemer of the world.

Fathers of the 1st Council, Tone 8

Thou art most glorious, O Christ our God, / Who hast established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth. / Through them Thou hast guided us to the True Faith. // O greatly compassionate One, glory to Thee!

Glory ... Fathers of the 1st Council, Tone 8

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one Faith for the Church. / Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology, // It defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

Now & ever … Ascension, Tone 6

When Thou hadst fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, / and united earth to heaven, / Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, / not being parted from those who love Thee, / but remaining with them and crying: // "I am with you, and there is no one against you!"

Today's Scripture

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

In those days: Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Gospel: John 17:1-13

At that time, Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves."

Prayers

For health of: Archbishop Nathaniel Popp, Archbishop Alexander Golitzin, Mat. Myra Kovalak, Marcia Lutz, Bernard Kusior, Julia Jay, Nina Fatula. *Especially remember in prayer Rebecca Ream, who is acutely ill.*

The newly-departed: Archimandrite Panteleimon *(formerly Abbot Seraphim)* (4/24). Fr Simion Pavel (4/24). Fr Alexander Poshyvajlo (4/22). Mat. Eleanor Margitich (4/25). Christina Murianka (5/18). Robert Long (5/23).

Announcements

Please continue to keep Becky Ream in your fervent prayers, along with her entire family (Dave, Jesika, Justin), as she continues her struggle at Penn Medicine Hospital in Phila. At this time, some gas gift cards would be appreciated to help with travel.

Next week, June 8 is our follow-up A**ll-Parish Meeting** to review the budget for the 2nd half of the year. We know it is difficult having such meetings during the summer months, and especially after Pentecost's Kneeling Vespers, but it is critical we establish a finalized budget. *Please make every effort to attend so that we can proceed. We will try to keep it as short as possible!*

Attendance

Sun Apr 27 Liturgy: 23, 0 children (Communion: 17)
Sun May 4 Liturgy: 28, 0 children (Communion: 23)
Sun May 11 Liturgy: 22, 0 children (Communion: 17)
Sun May 18 Liturgy: 27 adults, 2 children (Communion: 22 adults, 1 children)
Sun May 25 Liturgy: 28, 0 children (Communion: 22)

Christ's Ministry and the Father

Christ's ministry ... [is] humble; it is always in relationship to the One who sent him, that is, the Father. When Jesus Christ acts, it is God the Father who acts, and **who is revealed in that act**. *"I can do nothing on my own authority; ... I seek not my own will, but the will of him who sent me"* (Jn 5:30) are the words of Christ himself. These follow the declaration that *"as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself"* (Jn 5:26). He therefore is the Son of this Father, and **his ministry is reflected as one of humility before the Father**: *"the Father is greater than I"* (Jn 14:28); he has not come of himself, but the Father has sent him (Jn 8:42). And even if it seems that he "honors" himself, that is "nothing" in light of this humility before the Father:

> *If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say that he is your God. (Jn 8:54)*

Because this **oneness** between Christ and the Father is present, St John's gospel tells us that he speaks what he has heard from the Father (8:26). What the Father has commanded him, he does (14:31). He does what "pleases" the

Father (8:29). He declares the "name" of the Father in which he speaks (17:26). All this means that **Christ's ministry is the Father's ministry, the Father working through Christ** (114:10). Finally, however, we receive the ultimate word regarding this: "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30). Thus, in terms of ministry, "He who believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me" (Jn 12:44). It is this which Christ makes clear to Philip, who not yet understanding these words, seeks to "see" the Father:

> *Philip said to him, "Lord show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you yet do not know me? He who has seen me has seen the Father, Philip." (Jn 14:9)*

If it is true, then, that Christ and the Father are one, we can even say, in this sense, that **the ministry of Christ begins from before his appearance in Galilee**, i.e. even **before the Incarnation**. *"Before Abraham was, I am"* (Jn 8:57). There was no such "conversion" of Christ (an ancient heresy) in which his ministry begins, even if the fullness of his ministry on earth is revealed in the Incarnation. **He is "from the foundation of the world" with the Father**, i.e. before his fleshly appearance.

We find a clue to this when Jesus is but the twelve-year-old boy who is found "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions" (Lk 2:46). We find there that he must already "be about his Father's business" (Lk 2:49, KJV); this is what his parents could not understand (Lk 2:50). This eternal ministry is also known by St John the Forerunner in the Jordan; the Baptist recognized Christ before the baptism (Mt 3:14) for which reason he did not deem himself worthy to baptize him.

Thus **Christ's ministry**, since it is one with his life (which is eternal), **is before the world and exists beyond the world**. Being one with the Father, his ministry is eternal, and those who minister in this temporal world, also participate in his eternal ministry.

– Fr. Joseph Allen, *The Ministry of the Church: The Image of Pastoral Care* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986).

Welcome to all visitors who have prayed and celebrated the Divine Liturgy with us this morning! We invite all of you downstairs for fellowship after the conclusion of the Liturgy. If you have any questions at all, please reach out to Fr. John at any time. *We hope to see you again!*

Please note: In the Orthodox Church, the receiving of Holy Communion is the sign of one's full participation in the mystery of the Faith, and all Orthodox Christians should receive it frequently.

For this reason, Communion is offered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves to receive it (through prayer, fasting, and confession) and are at peace with each other. Those who partake of the Eucharist normally fast from food and drink in the morning before the Divine Liturgy, if they are able.